

CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIPS SYSTEM
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CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY WILDLIFE TASK GROUP
Database Version 8.1 (2005)

B702 Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*
Family: Apodidae Order: Apodiformes Class: Aves

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, SEASONALITY

The chimney swift is a rare but regular spring and fall transient and summer visitor in coastal areas from Mendocino County to San Diego County, and in the Owens Valley (Small 1994). Spring migrants occur from mid-May to mid-June; there are few records after 1 October. The first nesting report of chimney swifts in California was in 1975 in Mendocino County (Small 1994). Chimney swifts are often found in cities and towns.

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: No diet information specific to California. In general, chimney swifts feed on flying insects (Ehrlich et al 1988, Small 1994).

Cover: No data. Feeds while flying; in other areas, often roosts in chimney, hollow tree, or other suitable structure (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Reproduction: No information specific to California. Nests on chimney walls or other appropriate human structure or tree hollow in other areas (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Water: No information.

Pattern: Rare but regular May-September transient and nester in coastal areas and the Owens Valley.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Active during the day.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: Present in California only May-September; winters in South America (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Home Range: Not known.

Territory: Probably not territorial, except right at the nest.

Reproduction: Not well known. In other areas, chimney swifts nest in colonies of a few pairs, and lay up to six eggs during spring and early summer in a half-saucer nest in a chimney. There frequently are helpers at the nest; polygyny and polyandry are reported (Dexter 1981, Zammuto et al. 1981, Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Niche: May be captured by falcons.

REFERENCES

- Dexter, R. W. 1981. Nesting success of chimney swifts related to age and number of adults at the nest, and the subsequent fate of the visitors. *J. Field Ornithol.* 52:228-232.
- Ehrlich, P. R., D. S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. *The birder's handbook*. Simon and Schuster, New York.
- Small, A. 1994. *California birds: their status and distribution*. Ibis Publishing Co., Vista, CA.
- Zammuto, R. M., E. C. Franks, and C. R. Preston. 1981. Factors associated with the interval between feeding visits in brood-rearing chimney swifts. *J. Field Ornithol.* 52:134-139.